



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
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COMMISSION REDESIGNATES PORTIONS OF THE 18 GHz BAND; ALLOWS BLANKET LICENSING OF FIXED-SATELLITE EARTH STATIONS IN THE Ka-BAND; AND ALLOCATES SPECTRUM FOR THE BROADCASTING-SATELLITE SERVICE

Washington, DC – The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has adopted rules that redesignate portions of the 17.7-20.2 GHz band, also called the 18 GHz band, among the various currently allocated services in order to make more efficient use of this spectrum and to better accommodate the operational needs of licensees.

The adopted band plan and associated decisions will ensure terrestrial fixed service (FS) operators continued interference-free access to spectrum at 18 GHz, while allowing the prompt and efficient deployment of new satellite systems in part through the authorization of satellite earth stations on a blanket license basis. Where feasible, terrestrial fixed service channels will be separated from those employed in Fixed-Satellite Service (FSS) systems, through the designation of dedicated sub-bands. Current and future services in the 18 GHz band will typically include broadband internet access, interactive multimedia, franchised or private cable, cellular backbone, satellite feederlinks, telemedicine and various digital data services. The adopted bandplan is:

FS ¹	GSO/FSS &FS	GSO/FSS	NGSO/FSS ²	MSS/FL ³ & FS	GSO/FSS ⁴
600 MHz	280 MHz	220 MHz	500 MHz	400 MHz	500 MHz
17.7	18.3	18.58	18.8	19.3	19.7 20.2 GHz

In bands where geostationary satellite (GSO) and non-geostationary satellite (NGSO) FSS operators will have primary status (18.58-18.8 and 18.8-19.3 GHz, respectively), the

¹ An allocation to the BSS in the 17.3-17.7 GHz band and associated FSS feederlinks in the band 24.75-25.25 GHz has also been adopted, in addition to this bandplan designating services for the band 17.7-19.7 GHz band.

² Indoor low power point-to-multipoint terrestrial fixed systems may continue to be licensed and operate on a co-primary basis with NGSO/FSS in the 18.82-18.87 GHz and 19.16-19.21 GHz bands.

³ Mobile-Satellite Service Feeder Links (MSS/FL).

⁴ We show the band 19.7-20.2 GHz in this spectrum table merely to illustrate the total spectrum available to the GSO/FSS. This band was not altered by this *Report and Order*.

Commission adopted rules that permit certain existing fixed stations to continue to operate on a co-primary basis subject to the over-riding right of satellite providers to require them to relocate. With respect to the 18.58-18.8 GHz band, fixed stations licensed or with applications pending as of the adoption date of this *Report and Order* will remain co-primary for a period of ten years following the effective date of this *Report and Order*. With respect to the 18.8-19.3 GHz band, stations licensed or with applications pending as of September 18, 1998 will remain co-primary for a period of ten years following the effective date of this *Report and Order*. During this common ten-year period, any required relocations will be at the expense of the FSS licensee requiring such an involuntary action. However, in the case of 19.26-19.30 GHz, the co-primary status of existing terrestrial fixed stations, as well as their entitlement to relocation costs, is permanent.

Pursuant to these new rules, the requesting FSS licensee must pay all relocation costs, and build and test the replacement system for comparability. Terrestrial fixed service operators are not required to relocate until the alternative facilities have proven of equivalent performance.

In an important action consequential to the results of the ITU's World Radiocommunications Conference (WRC-2000), the Commission decided, in coordination with NTIA, that the power flux-density across the 200 MHz band 18.6-18.8 GHz produced at the Earth's surface by emissions from a space station may be relaxed by 6 dB from present requirements. This modification was considered essential by GSO/FSS licensees to the implementation of their services to the public.

In addition, the Commission adopted a blanket licensing procedure that allows GSO/FSS satellite earth stations in the Ka-band (the 18 GHz down link band and 27.5-30 GHz up link band) to operate under a single system license in those segments of these bands that are designated for their sole primary use. This decision will provide a fast and efficient means of licensing the large numbers of small antenna earth stations expected to be deployed. While the Commission also decided to allow the blanket licensing of NGSO FSS earth stations, the specific rules for that purpose have been deferred to a later rule making proceeding.

Finally, the Commission adopted a new allocation for the Broadcasting-Satellite Service (BSS) and an associated allocation for FSS feeder links for systems implementing that allocation. The BSS allocation is at 17.3-17.7 GHz and will become effective on April 1, 2007. The FSS feeder link allocation is at 24.75-25.25 GHz and becomes effective immediately. The adopted BSS allocation differs slightly from the international allocation to ensure that the continuing and growing spectrum needs of the fixed service will be met.

In making these decisions, the Commission sought to balance the needs of all existing and future services wishing to use the 18 GHz band.

Action by the Commission June 20, 2000, by *Report and Order* (FCC 00-212). Chairman Kennard, Commissioners Ness, Powell and Tristani, with Commissioner Furchtgott-Roth approving in part and dissenting in part and issuing a separate statement.

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